

VZCZCXRO5905
RR RUEHHM
DE RUEHHI #0872 1080554
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 180554Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1506
INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 0960

UNCLAS HANOI 000872

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR EAP/MLS, DRL/IRF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KIRF](#) [PHUM](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: HANOI AUTHORITIES FACILITATING
REGISTRATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES?

[1](#)1. (SBU) An expatriate Amcit who is a Jehovah's Witness informed Poloff on April 14 that representatives of the small congregation of witnesses in Hanoi recently were called in by local Committee on Religious Affairs (CRA) officials and given two application forms for official registration as a Protestant group. (Note: The congregation has for over a year been trying to acquire the proper forms to apply for official recognition from the GVN. End Note.)

[1](#)2. (SBU) Although, these application forms (serial identification DXDKSHTG, registration of a Protestant congregation, and GCNDKSHTG, certification of a Protestant place of worship) do not technically apply to Jehovah's Witnesses as they actually do not consider themselves Protestant, the group is encouraged by this unexpected development. They hope that they will be able to use these forms to begin the process of achieving outright recognition of their church.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Comment: This development may be another indication that the CRA is pushing to recognize more religions in order to satisfy our religious freedom concerns under the Country of Particular Concern designation. End comment.

MARINE